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Downham Rural District

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR 1951

Including the Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector
(MR. G. S. SENNITT, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.Inst.P.C.)

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Downham Rural District Council

Members of the Public Health Committee

Chairman : Mr. H. G. Teverson,

Vice-Chairman : Mr. C. W. Thornhill

Mr. S. Bailey

Mr. H. Leonard

Mr. E. Barker

Mr. H. J. Martin

Mr. W. H. Bentley

Rev. A. S. D. Page

Mr. J. E. Britton

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Mr. M. Stocks

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Mrs. F. S. Hopkins

Mr. H. Gates

Mr. S. F. L. Warner

Mr. F. Green

Mr. R. R. Wilde

Mr. P. Hall

Mr. G. G. Wright

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council are ex-officio members of the Committee.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointments of:—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health

Asst. County School Medical Officer

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Urban District

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District.

SANITARY INSPECTOR

G. S. Sennitt, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.INST.P.C.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR

G. L. Field, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A.

CLERK TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Miss I. J. Johncox.

STOKE FERRY,

June, 1952

To The Chairman and Members of the Downham
Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my Annual Report on the sanitary circumstances, health and vital statistics of your district during the year ending December 31st, 1951.

The general health of the district has been satisfactory and has been entirely free from any outbreaks of the graver infectious diseases such as Poliomyelitis—Typhoid—Diphtheria and Smallpox.

The Birth Rate (15.4) compares favourably with that for the whole country, and the Death Rate (11.2) is lower than that for England and Wales.

The number of Infectious Diseases (192) notified during the year under review, is I am pleased to say, almost a quarter of the number of those notified in 1950.

I would like to express my appreciation of the support given me in performing my duties by the Clerk to the Council—and Officers of all departments, especially my Senior Sanitary Inspector.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

Medical Officer of Health

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1951

Area (in acres)	124,152
Population, 1931	15,503
Population, 1951	25,050
Number of separate dwellings occupied 1951	6,411
Rateable Value, 1951	£71,427
Product of a penny rate, 1951	£300

	LIVE BIRTHS (386)			Rate		
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	365	198	167			
Illegitimate	21	11	10			
	386	209	177	15.4	15.5	14.81

STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000 live births)						
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	9	5	4			
Illegitimate	—	—	—			
	9	5	4	23.3	16.3	22.85

DEATHS (all causes)						
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
	281	161	12.0	11.2	12.5	12.44

DEATHS from Puerperal Causes						
Puerperal and post-Abortive Sepsis				...	...	Nil
Other Puerperal causes				...	...	Nil

INFANT MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 live births)						
	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	12	5	7			
Illegitimate	—	—	—			
	12	5	7	31.1	29.6	29.51

DEATHS from						
Cancer (all ages)		...		..		50
Measles (all ages)		...	..	...		Nil
Whooping Cough			..	...		Nil
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)				...	...	1

SECTION A

Natural and Social Conditions

Area	124,152 acres
Population (Registrar General's estimate)	25,050

- DEATHS. The total number assigned to the District as given by the Registrar General 281, an increase of 30 on the figure for 1950. The Death Rate of 11.2 per 1,000 compares very favourably with that for England and Wales, 12.5.
- BIRTHS. The number (386), shows a decrease of 34 compared with last year. The birth rate is 15.5.
- MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were no maternal deaths the credit for which is due to the excellent service rendered by the District Nurses, members of the Maternity Unit and the General Practitioners.
- INFANT MORTALITY. The number of infants dying under the age of one year was 10 as compared with 18 during 1951. Eight of these infants were under four weeks old. Prematurity was a caustive factor.

SECTION B

1. GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Norfolk Executive Council, 54 Prince of Wales' Road,
Norwich. *Clerk*—R. J. COBB, Esq.

2. EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD

Senior Administrative Medical Officer:—

DR. J. B. EWEN, M.D., D.P.H.,
Croft-Holme, 117 Chesterton Road,
Cambridge.

(a) GENERAL

- (i) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich
- (ii) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital, King's Lynn
- (iii) Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich
- (iv) St. James' Hospital, King's Lynn (for chronic sick)
- (v) The Howdale Home, Downham Market.

(b) MATERNITY

- (i) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital (Maternity Unit)
- (ii) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

(c) INFECTIOUS

- (i) County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham
- (ii) Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) SANATORIA

- (i) Kelling Sanatorium, Holt
- (ii) Bramblewood Sanatorium, Holt.

(e) MENTAL

- (i) St. Andrew's Hospital, Norwich
- (ii) Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich
- (iii) Heckingham Sanatorium, Norwich
- (iv) Little Plumstead, Norwich.

3. MATERNITY SERVICES

(a) DISTRICT NURSES (showing Parishes and Villages served):

Nurse Gerrard,	Feltwell
High Street, Feltwell, Thetford	Hockwold
Nurse Hunns,	Methwold
Lower Green, Methwold, Thetford	
Nurse Smith,	Wimbotsham
Nurse's Cottage, Stow, King's Lynn	Stow
Nurse Porter,	Nordelph
Nurse's Home, Nordelph	Downham West.
Nurse Nelson,	Watlington
6 Council Houses,	Tottenham
Station Road,	Wormegay
Watlington, King's Lynn	South Runcton
Nurse Walker,	Stoke Ferry
Rose Cottage, Stoke Ferry, K. Lynn	Whittington
Nurse Mosley,	Wiggenhall St.
18 Council Houses,	Mary the Virgin
Wiggenhall St. Germans	Wiggenhall St.
King's Lynn	Germans, Wiggenhall St. Mary
	Magdalen
	Marham
Nurse Horn,	Shouldham
27 Barton Bendish,	Shouldham
King's Lynn	Thorpe, Stradsett, Fincham,
	Barton Bendish
Nurse Russell,	Denver, Ryston
High Street, Hilgay,	Fordham,
Downham Market	Hilgay
Nurse Rushworth,	Southery
Nurse's Bungalow, Southery,	
Downham Market	
Nurse Hann, (Temporary)	Crimplesham
Crimplesham,	West Dereham
King's Lynn	Wereham
	Boughton
	Wreton

(b) MATERNITY. Beds in Regional Hospital Board Establishments Stow Hall Maternity Home, Stow Bardolph.

4. AMBULANCE AND HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE

This is a County Council function and is controlled by the Joint Ambulance Committee. It is worked on an Agency basis by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John and W.V.S.

The Downham Rural area is jointly served by the Downham Market, King's Lynn and Thetford Ambulances. Infectious Disease cases are conveyed by East Dereham and King's Lynn Infectious Disease Ambulances.

5. RED CROSS & ST. JOHN MEDICAL LOAN DEPOTS

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| (a) Wiggenhall St. Germans | Mrs. Richer |
| (b) Watlington | Mrs. Thomas |
| (c) Marham | Mrs. F. Brown |
| (d) Downham Market | Mrs. I. Burbeck |

6. COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES

(a) INFANT WELFARE CENTRES

- (i) Downham Market
- (ii) Outwell
- (iii) Methwold

The Assistant County Medical Officer of Health attends at the above sessions.

In addition, Village Infant Welfare Centres are held monthly at the following villages: Fincham, Hockwold, Hilgay, Northwold, Shouldham, Southery, Stow, Stoke Ferry, Watlington, Welney, West Dereham, Magdalen, Wormegay and Feltwell.

(b) SCHOOL MINOR AILMENT CLINIC

Downham C.P. (Mixed) School (every Wednesday during term)

(c) SCHOOL DENTAL CLINIC

Downham C.P. (closed—no Dental Officer available)

(d) HOME HELP SERVICE

The County Home Help Scheme is doing excellent work and Home Helps are at present available for the following Parishes and Villages: Feltwell, Hockwold, Northwold, Stoke Ferry, Wereham, West Dereham, Stow Bardolph, Watlington, Magdalen, St. Germans, Methwold, Denver, Ten Mile Bank, Southery and Hilgay.

7. VENEREAL DISEASE CLINIC

West Norfolk and King's Lynn Hospital:

Males	Females & Children
Tuesdays & Fridays	Tuesdays & Wednesdays
7 p.m.	at 3 p.m.

8. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION

- (i) Disinfection of premises is carried out by the Senior Sanitary Inspector's staff.
- (ii) Disinfestation of bedding, clothing, etc., which cannot be carried out by this department, are sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital.

9. LABORATORY SERVICES

- (a) Public Health Laboratory,
Isolation Hospital,
Bowthorpe Road,
Norwich.

Under the direction of Dr. I. M. Dowsett.

- (b) Public Analyst:

W. Lincoln Sutton, Esq., F.R.I.C.,
Redwell Street,
Norwich.

SECTION C

Prevalence of & Control Over Infectious & other Diseases

SMALLPOX

No cases were notified

SCARLET FEVER

Thirteen cases were notified during the year as compared with eight in 1950. All the cases were isolated at home.

DIPHTHERIA

For the fourth year in succession no cases have been notified. This happy position has undoubtedly been obtained by the active immunisation of infants in the past years. A certain complacency has now arisen amongst parents, who, believing diphtheria to be a disease of the past — are failing in their parental duty to have their infants and young children immunised. The Health Visitors and District Nurses have been instructed to encourage the parents to accept this free protection from a fatal disease.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

This is carried out free of charge by the family doctor or at the Infant Welfare Centres

Under 1 yr	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	Mid 1951 Child Population
5	109	159	183	351	1356	1292	0-4 yrs 2061 / 5-14 yrs 3395

Total Immunised 3455. Percentage : 63.34.

PNEUMONIA

Twenty-five cases were notified, ten in the month of January. Sixteen deaths from this cause were registered.

ERYSIPELAS

Seven cases, ranging between the ages of 35 and 65 plus, were notified.

MEASLES

The number of cases notified shows a very marked decrease over the previous year, 98 cases as against 454 in 1950. The age group most affected was ten years, and the monthly incidence rate was highest in May when there were 53 cases.

INFECTIVE JAUNDICE

Eight cases were notified. The age groups varied from 2 to 20 years.

ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS

It is gratifying to report no incident of this disease.

TUBERCULOSIS

Eight cases of Pulmonary and two of non-pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during 1951. This is a decrease of ten compared with the preceding year. There were four deaths, three from the pulmonary and one from the non-pulmonary type

The following table indicates the incidence of Tuberculosis in the District.

T.B. all forms			Rate per 1,000 population Downham Market R.D.	County Rate
Male	Female	Total		
8	2	10	0.39	0.85

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS

No Schools were closed on account of any Infectious disease, etc., during 1951.

SECTION D

Table No. 1

STATISTICAL TABLES, 1951

CAUSES OF DEATH

CAUSES OF DEATH			MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	1	2	3
2	Tuberculosis, other	...	—	1	1
3	Syphilitic diseases	...	—	—	—
4	Diphtheria	...	—	—	—
5	Whooping Cough	...	—	—	—
6	Meningococcal infections	...	—	—	—
7	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	—	—	—
8	Measles	...	—	—	—
9	Other infective and parasitic diseases		—	1	1
10	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach		6	4	10
11	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, Bronchus		—	—	—
12	Malignant Neoplasm, breast		—	7	7
13	Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus		—	4	4
14	Other Malignant Lymphatic and Neoplasm		20	9	29
15	Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	...	—	1	1
16	Diabetes	...	—	1	1
17	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	18	13	31
18	Coronary disease, angina	...	11	6	17
19	Hypertension with heart disease	...	1	6	7
20	Other heart diseases	...	37	27	64
21	Other Circulatory diseases	...	5	6	11
22	Influenza	...	3	6	9
23	Pneumonia	...	11	5	16
24	Bronchitis	...	9	4	13
25	Other diseases of the Respiratory system		2	1	3
26	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum		2	—	2
27	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	2	1	3
28	Nephritis, Nephrosis	...	3	2	5
29	Hyperplasia of Prostrate	...	1	—	1
30	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	—	—	—
31	Congenital Malformations	...	—	—	—
32	Other defined and ill defined diseases	...	14	12	26
33	Motor vehicle accidents	...	4	—	4
34	All other accidents	...	9	1	10
35	Suicide	...	2	—	2
36	Homicide and operations of war	...	—	—	—
All causes			161	120	281

SECTION H

Table No. 2

Causes of Death of Children Under One Year, 1951

Causes of Death	AGE IN WEEKS					Total
	1	2	3	4	5—52	
I. Congenital Malformations						
II. Diseases of Early Infancy						
(a) Congenital Debility						
(b) Premature Birth	5					5
(c) Injury at Birth	1					1
(d) Atelectasis						
(e) Others						
III. Diseases of Respiratory System					1	1
IV. Diseases of Nervous System						
V. Diseases of Digestive System					1	1
VI. Tuberculosis Disease						
VII. Infectious Disease						
VIII. Syphilis						
IX. Overlaying						
X. Violence						
XI. All other causes	2	2				4
Total	8	2			2	12

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

NOTIFICATION IN AGE GROUPS, 1951

Table No. 3

DISEASE	Under 1 year											65 & over	TOTAL.	REMOVED TO HOSPITAL. DEATHS	
	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—					
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1	4	8	...	...	...	...	13	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	Nil	Nil
Measles	2	5	6	7	8	47	12	5	4	2	98	Nil	Nil		
Whooping Cough	3	4	6	11	2	12	...	...	...	...	38	Nil	Nil
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	7	Nil	Nil
Pneumonia	1	1	...	...	1	2	1	2	2	6	25	Nil	Nil
Infective Jaundice	...	...	1	...	3	...	...	1	3	...	8	Nil	Nil
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	Nil	Nil
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	Nil	Nil
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	Nil	Nil
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	Nil	Nil
Totals	7	10	13	18	15	66	21	8	10	9	192	Nil	Nil		

MONTHLY INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Table No. 4

Other than Tuberculosis

DISEASE	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Scarlet Fever ...	1	4	4	.	2	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	13
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	..	.		.	.	.	..	1	..	..	..	1
Measles	2	2	8	10	53	8	10	3	1	..		1	98
Whooping Cough	1	3		9	7	...	4	4	2	..	4	4	38
Erysipelas .	...	...	2	2	1	...	1	..	..	..	1	..	7
Pneumonia	10	3	2	3	3	1	1	..	..	..	2	..	25
Infective Jaundice	..	...	1	.	...	..	2	5	..	..	..	..	8
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	..	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Dysentery ...	.	..	...	..		..	...	...	.	...	..	..	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	.			...	1	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	1	..	...	.	..		..	...	.	..	...	...	1
Totals	15	12	17	24	67	9	19	12	5	0	7	5	192

Table No. 5

New Cases of and Deaths from Tuberculosis, 1951

Age in years	NEW CASES				DEATHS				Total
	Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	
— 1									
— 5	2								
— 15				1					
— 25		1	1						
— 35	3								
— 45	1				1				1
— 55	1							1	1
— 65						2			2
65 & over									
Total	7	1	1	1	1	2	Nil	1	4

SECTION E

Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my first Annual Report on the work of the Health Department. I commenced duties on the 1st March, 1951, Mr. D. N. Rowsell having acted as Senior Inspector for the five months preceding that date.

Mr. Rowsell secured another appointment and left on 31st March, closely following Mr. J. Osler, who was called for service in H.M. Forces in the middle of March.

Miss J. Johncox was engaged as Shorthand-typist/Clerk (Temporary) on 2nd April, and Mr. G. L. Field took up duties as Additional Sanitary Inspector on 28th May.

The staff of the Department thus changed over completely in the space of a few months.

I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the members and all officers of the Council for their generous assistance and co-operation at all times.

1. Summary of Visits and Inspections.

Sewage Disposal Works	96
Drainage and Sewerage	614
Housing	270
Refuse Collection and Disposal	175
Food and Food Premises, including Dairies ...	137
Water Supplies	24
Infectious Disease	11
Movable Dwellings	65
Factories	16
Rat Infestations	51
Other Vermin	7
Petroleum	16
Keeping of Animals	13
Miscellaneous	261
	<hr/> 1756 <hr/>

2. Notices Served.

The number of written notices served during the year was 38, as follows:

	<i>Informal (letters)</i>	<i>Statutory</i>	<i>Complied with</i>	<i>Complied with (notices served in 1950)</i>
HOUSING REPAIRS	17	—	5	7
DRAINAGE	7	1	4	2
FOOD PREMISES	7		5	2
DIRTY CONDITIONS	4		1	
WATER SUPPLY		—	—	
MISCELLANEOUS	1	1	1	
Totals	36	2	16	11

In addition, verbal notice was sufficient in many cases to bring about required improvements, or to secure the abatement of nuisances.

The notices not yet entered as “complied with” are still the subject of negotiation with persons concerned.

In the case of Housing Repairs in particular, the rate at which they are completed under present day conditions is very slow. When instructions have been given to builders by owners, a start is often not made for months.

3. Complaints and Nuisances.

267 complaints of a very variable nature were entered in the Register and investigated. These related mainly to Housing defects, unsatisfactory drainage, smells from accumulations of noxious matter and the keeping of animals, and infestations by rats and mice.

Abatement of the above nuisances, where substantiated, was secured by informal action, but it was necessary to serve 2 Statutory Notices.

One particularly strong complaint from many families arose owing to fumes and dust from an exceptionally large heap of sawdust which had been set on fire in close proximity to one of the Council's Housing Estates.

The Owner had bought the land, and wished to be rid of the sawdust as cheaply as possible.

It was necessary to serve a Statutory Notice before abatement was secured, and it is interesting to record that the actual abatement proved less difficult than a good many people, including the Sanitary Inspector, realised. A useful piece of equipment, the Bulldozer!

4. Housing.

(a) General

During the year, a Demolition Order was made in respect of one cottage, and an "Undertaking" was accepted from the owner of another that it would not be used for human habitation. The Council agreed to re-house both families of seven as soon as possible on the Stone Cross Estate.

Representations to the owners secured the demolition of five dilapidated cottages, which were unoccupied. Three had been damaged by fire, and the other three had fallen into complete disrepair. Demolition of one cottage additional to the latter group was held up owing to difficulties arising in respect of a party wall.

Upon the re-housing of an old couple by the Council, the Owners agreed that the cottage which they had occupied would not be again re-let, and they agreed to demolish in due course.

Strong action by the Council was indicated in the case of a person, who, before completing enquiries and purchase, carried out substantial alterations and additions to a house which was subject to an Operative Demolition Order. No plans had been submitted, and no planning permission sought.

In addition, purchase was completed regardless of advice.

Action to secure demolition was being pursued by the Council at the end of the year.

A house subject to a Demolition Order can only be "saved" where the house is subsequently scheduled as a building of architectural or historic interest, otherwise it is important that demolition of such houses should be secured at the earliest possible moment. A number of cottages at Feltwell, demolition of which has been delayed for various reasons, require to be thus dealt with.

There are a very large number of houses in the District which are totally unfit to live in, many of the worst ones being situated on river banks. The conditions at some of these houses are deplorable, rents are very low, and often the house belongs to an aged person or couple who have no funds available for repairs.

Your Officers spend a great deal of time trying to get essential minimum repairs such as leaking roofs carried out at such houses, when the only real solution is demolition, and we look forward with keen anticipation to the day when a slum clearance programme can really be set in motion.

The repair and improvement provisions of the Housing Act, 1949, have been almost totally ineffective due to lack of capital on the part of Owners, and in any case, it is felt that the standard of fitness required by the Act on completion is far too high.

The Rural Housing Survey was re-commenced, but owing to pressure of more important work, slow progress was made.

(b) Council Houses

PERMANENT HOUSES

A total of 33 Houses were completed during the year, bringing the number of permanent houses constructed during the post-war housing programme to 313.

96 Houses of varying types were under construction most of which should be completed during 1952.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Council still held the 122 units of accommodation on the Stone Cross Estate, but the number of families living on the Methwold Airfield was being reduced to a maximum of 46.

GENERALLY

At the 31st December, 1951, the number of dwellings controlled by the Council was 949 and this figure was made up as follows:—

Traditional Houses	...	...	...	693
Pre-fabricated Houses	...	...	...	76
Temporary Houses	...	...	...	167
Requisitioned Houses	...	...	...	10
Other Properties	...	...	...	3
Total	...	...	...	<hr/>949 <hr/>

WAITING LISTS

At the 31st December, 1951, 586 separate applications were registered for permanent accommodation and a further 107 were registered for temporary accommodation. Feltwell still had the greatest need for houses with Southery a very close second.

RE-HOUSING OF T.B. PATIENTS

During the year 1 T.B. patient was re-housed and 2 other afflicted families had been selected for re-housing but had not yet taken occupation.

5. Food and Food Premises Inspections.

(a) General

137 visits to food premises were made during the year. By informal action and suggestions, many improvements were brought about, particularly in relation to the provision of hot and cold water, sanitary accommodation for employees, and general cleansing of walls, floors and ceilings.

One of the big difficulties which many tradesmen have to face in this district is exceeding cramped accommodation, and regular cleansing is made very difficult. Also, as in most Rural Districts, a high proportion of shops are necessarily "general" shops, and one often sees

bread, cakes and cheese, etc., sandwiched between bootlaces, pots and pans, bottles of hair cream and firelighters.

It is considered that a substantial improvement could be brought about at small expense by partitioning off one part of the shop, and confining all food, or unwrapped food, at any rate, to this section.

A general survey made after the Notices relating to "Dogs in food premises" had been sent out for exhibition by food tradesmen showed that they were welcomed by the trade.

Several people were warned of infringement of the Council's "Clean Food Byelaws," and the uncleanly practices soon ceased. Not enough time can be given to this important work, however.

All the bakers, butchers, fishmongers and fish friers were visited during the year, as were most of the slaughterhouses. At 31st December, there were in the District:—

3	Fishmongers (selling wet fish)
13	Fish Friers
6	Mobile Fish Friers
15	Bakers
19	Butchers
13	Slaughterhouses

(a) Ice Cream.

At the end of the year, there were 38 premises in the district at which ice cream was sold. Most of it was pre-packed ice cream made by the large companies. No manufacture of ice cream is carried on.

Most of these premises were visited, and during the year, 11 new premises were registered.

21 samples of ice cream were taken and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Norwich, with the following results:—

		GRADE			
	No. of samples	I	II	III	IV
Source "A"	2	2	—	—	—
„ "B"	4	1	2	—	1
„ "C"	1	1	—	—	—
„ "D"	5	4	1	—	—
„ "E"	4	1	1	—	2
„ "F"	1	—	1	—	—
„ "G"	1	—	1	—	—
„ "H"	1	1	—	—	—
„ "I"	1	1	—	—	—
„ "J"	1	1	—	—	—
Totals	21	12	6	0	3

The above results may be regarded as very satisfactory, as I have perused the results of samples sent in from similar "sources" in other Norfolk Districts.

(c) The following food was condemned as unfit for human consumption during the year:—

182½ lbs. of Beef (bone taint and bruising)
15 lbs. of Mutton
12 lbs. of Pork
15 lbs. of Home-cured Ham
36¾ lbs. of Tinned Ham
9½ lbs. of Tinned Luncheon Meat
65 Tins of Milk
15 Tins of Miscellaneous Foods
4½ lbs. of Cheese
26 lbs. of Tea
3 stone of Cod Fillets

(d) Milk and Dairies.

Two new Dairies and 2 Distributors were registered during the year, making a total of 2 Dairies and 4 Distributors registered by the Council.

As regards designated milk, 3 "Dealers" licences in respect of "Tuberculin Tested" and 2 in respect of "Pasteurised" were issued. It is also suspected that some distributors operating from other districts have not applied for "Supplementary dealers licences" in respect of designated milk. One has sympathy with these people, as the present legal provisions as to milk are very complicated.

There are approximately 40 Producer-retailers in the District who are not registerable by the Council, but the enforcement of the provisions of the Milk and Dairies Regulations relating to hygienic distribution is the Council's responsibility. A list is being compiled gradually, and more work is required here.

During the year, the Medical Officer of Health served 6 Notices restraining the sale of milk from separate herds unless it had been pasteurised, owing to the discovery of Tubercule Bacilli in the milk in one case and Brucella Abortus in the rest.

Brucella Abortus is liable to cause Undulant Fever in man.

Two of the Notices were rescinded before the end of the year, as also were 2 Notices relating to individual cows, which had been in operation since 1950. Both the individual cows were slaughtered.

Four Notices relating to whole herds thus remained in operation at the end of the year, and in addition, one Notice relating to an individual cow.

Sampling of the milk is carried out by the County Council in an effort to trace the offending cow or cows, but the fact that Brucella Abortus may be excreted intermittently makes detection difficult.

6. Movable Dwellings.

Eight new licences were granted to station and use movable dwellings during the year, while four more applications were in obedience, awaiting decision of the Planning Authority. One of the latter applications related to the use of land at Lynn Road, Downham Market (Wimbotsham Parish), as a Caravan Site.

The legal provisions relating to Movable Dwellings are contained in the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, and the Public Health Act, 1936. Planning Permission is required in the case where a movable dwelling is stationed on a site for a period in excess of 28 days, and in addition, a licence under the Public Health Act is required where a "stay" involves a period in excess of 42 days, or 60 days in any year.

The provisions of the two Acts are very difficult to integrate and administer, for many practical reasons, and simplification of the law is long overdue. A start should be made by splitting up the definition of "movable dwelling," so as to differentiate between, for instance, a modern trailer caravan and an old bus body.

7. National Assistance Acts, 1948 and 1951.

Almost at the close of the year, a death occurred at West Dereham, and it appeared that no arrangements were being made for burial.

As it is the Council's responsibility under the above Acts to arrange burial in such circumstances, the necessary instructions were given, and burial carried out. Full investigations are always made in these cases in order to see if the resultant expenses can be recovered.

8. Public Cleansing.

(a) REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

A fortnightly collection was maintained in all Parishes during the year, apart from the Hamlet of Feltwell Anchor, at which a once monthly call was instituted. After some consideration, the Council decided that the articulated refuse collection vehicle purchased in 1946 was not suited to the conditions in the area, and another moving floor vehicle, identical with the vehicle purchased in 1949, was ordered. At the same time, it was decided to order an Austin A-40 Truck to replace the Standard Truck used by the Department for transporting the tip-control employees and their equipment. This vehicle was becoming very difficult to maintain.

The "Kerbside" collection of refuse continued to operate, and this method is undoubtedly very economical. The extremely varied assortment of refuse containers used however, continued to contribute many practical difficulties and much unsightliness. The provision of proper covered dustbins at all premises is most desirable from all points of view. Economic and legal difficulties at present mitigate against any general action to this end.

Six refuse tips situated at Broomhill, Hilgay, Shouldham, Whittington, Feltwell and Hockwold were in regular use. It was

decided not to proceed with a proposed new tip at Stoke Ferry.

The Council authorised the purchase, later in the year, of steel track and soil cover for the tips in order that fully "controlled tipping" methods might be approached. Some progress was made towards improvement by shortening of the "faces" and the erection of light movable barbed wire fences. The "sealing" of the very steep faces wrongly formed at some of the tips is however economically impossible at this stage. Indiscriminate "dumping" continued to be a serious problem, and much additional work was rendered necessary, while similar "dumping" at some other pits under the control of Parish Councils was also serious. One is bound to reflect on the necessity for this when a collection service is provided.

(b) SALVAGE OF WASTE MATERIALS.

Owing to the National need for waste paper, and the good prices being paid, the Council decided later in the year to recommence collections. A five year contract with a Board Mill was entered into, the Mill undertaking to receive all the paper the Council could collect.

It was not necessary to make a big capital outlay, as the Council possessed certain equipment and accommodation, and the paper was to be baled by the men who collected it outside working hours at fixed rates per bale.

Collections commenced in November.

The Council decided not to operate a scheme for the salvage of tins and light metal from the refuse tips submitted for consideration by the Southern Counties Scrap Survey Committee.

(c) PAIL CLOSET EMPTYING.

Pail closets were again emptied once weekly during the daytime in the parishes of Hilgay, Denver, Fincham, Downham West and Feltwell, these parishes paying towards the cost of the service by means of a "special expenses rate." Some properties at Nordelph also received the service at a charge of £2 per pail per annum.

The greater part of four days per week was necessary for this work.

Disposal of pail contents in villages not so served continued to be by burial, and several complaints of nuisance were dealt with in this connection.

There is no doubt that the extension of the pail emptying service to other parishes in the district would be very beneficial, particularly as comprehensive main sewerage schemes appear so remote, but this would be dependent upon the provision of a further vehicle or vehicles and also upon improved facilities for bulk disposal of the pail contents.

The attention of the Council was drawn during the year to the urgent necessity of having another vehicle adapted for the collection of nightsoil, in order that the service should not break down if the Cesspool Emptier required repairs, and the purchase of a portable nightsoil tank to fit inside the Bedford Truck of your Surveyor's Department was strongly advocated. Such provision would also enable requests for cesspool emptying to be complied with much more promptly by the release of the Cesspool Emptier during exceptionally busy periods.

(d) CESSPOOL EMPTYING.

319 Cesspools were emptied during the year, compared with 270 in 1950 and 251 in 1949. In addition, 30 visits were made to sewage plants and sediment chambers, etc. The cesspool emptier was employed to its utmost capacity, and a considerable amount of overtime had to be worked. Even so, delay in honouring requests for service was inevitable.

With regard to cesspools on Council Housing Estates, the varying periods elapsing between required emptyings was the cause of much dissatisfaction among tenants, and some trouble was experienced in obtaining payment.

In the case of persons in receipt of National Assistance, the Council decided during the year to empty the cesspools for the sum of 7/6, which sum would be refunded to these persons by the Assistance Board.

9. Drainage, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

A very large amount of time is devoted to such work. The Council continued to maintain the sewage disposal plants serving the Stone Cross Estate and Methwold Airfield Housing Sites. The Methwold Airfield plant was not in use for a considerable period however, as the electric pumps became unservicable. An effort was made to utilise pumps from the derequisitioned Glebe Site plant, which were in a better condition mechanically, but this proved impossible owing to several structural differences which had not at first been apparent.

One of the electric pumps was eventually repaired satisfactorily, but a great deal of attention was necessary owing to accumulations of gas which developed in the extremely long rising main to the works. The provision of an improved air release valve did not, unfortunately, solve the difficulty.

The accumulation of gas is due to inherent design defects and it is understood that constant maintenance has always been necessary. It is thus strongly advisable that the occupation of this temporary housing site be terminated at the earliest possible moment.

Sewage plants serving Council Housing Sites at Wormegay, Wereham and Northwold were regularly maintained, while another plant at St. Germans was brought into use during the year. Conditions at the Northwold plant were much improved by the correction of a technical fault. The disposal of the effluent from the Wereham plant continued to be unsatisfactory, but as there were indications that the plant would become too small as more houses were constructed, no major works were undertaken.

Considerable trouble was again experienced from the large numbers of cesspools on Council Housing Sites, the position being aggravated by the abnormally wet Winter. Cesspools are entirely unsuitable for houses where a mains water supply is available.

The Department continued to maintain a substantial number of dykes receiving sewage in different Parishes, and a great deal of attention was necessary.

10. Water Supplies.

(a) MAIN PIPED SUPPLIES.

The three sources of supply to the Rural District viz: The Northern Half from the bore at Marham (previously the Wisbech Waterworks Company), the Southern Half from the bore at Denton Lodge, Feltwell (previously Downham R.D.C.), and the Welney area by the purchase in bulk from Ely R.D.C., were all under the control of the Wisbech and District Water Board, who had assumed such control in October, 1950.

Your Surveyor, Mr. H. Blakey, continued to serve as Water Engineer to the Board until June, 1951.

The following table is compiled from the Water Engineers reports, and relates only to the Denton Lodge supply:—

	1st Quarter	2nd	3rd	4th	Totals	Totals 1950
Rainfall	7.45	6.11	7.67	4.49	25.72	30.65
	ins.	ins.	ins.	ins.	ins.	ins.
Consumption	24,275,000	23,438,000	24,855,000	24,830,000	97,389,000	101,370,000
	gallons	gallons	gallons	gallons	gallons	gallons
Depth of water	80	78	not	not		
in well (average)	ft.	ft.	recorded	recorded		

The water continued to be of a high standard of purity, and all supplies were chlorinated. No contamination was experienced during the year, and the water had no marked action on old lead pipes.

The Marham and Feltwell supplies were examined weekly by the Board's own Chemist and Bacteriologist after treatment and prior to distribution, while the raw water was also examined periodically.

The number of new connections made during the year is not available. Your Surveyor estimated in 1950 that there were over 4,000 consumer properties in the District, of which more than 10% were industrial (mainly agriculture).

The Northern Area Water Scheme, involving 10 Parishes was completed during 1950, and the position at the end of the year with regard to mains laying in the Central Area Water Mains Extension Scheme was as follows: -

Barton Bendish	
Boughton	Completed
Hilgay	
Northwold	Completed
West Dereham	
Wereham	Completed
Welney	

(b) Well Water Supplies.

Five samples were taken from shallow wells at four private premises and submitted for bacteriological examination. All proved to be unsatisfactory, and the use of other water for domestic purposes, or at least boiling before use, was advised.

At one of these houses, it was proposed to use the water for a bottle fed infant, but a chemical analysis carried out in addition to the bacteriological examination showed the water to have a very high nitrate content, with the consequent danger that the infant might become cyanosed.

In the absence of a mains supply, a full examination was made of water from a deep bore at another private house. This water was highly satisfactory, and it was arranged for the infant's mother to use this supply.

Sampling by the County Council of another well at Wereham showed the water again to be unfit for the feeding of an infant, and the Department arranged for an alternative mains supply to be utilised for this purpose.

11. Disinfection and Disinfestation.

A number of houses were disinfected after Infectious Disease, formaldehyde being used, and the attention of householders was drawn to the greater importance of "current" disinfection in "nursed at home" cases.

Several premises were also treated for bed-bug and flea infestations, liquid sprays of D.D.T. and Benzine Hexachloride, and also "smoke generators" being employed.

One batch of bedding was sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital for steam treatment, owing to contact with lice and scabies.

12. Dirty Premises.

Six cases of dirty conditions in dwelling houses were discovered during the year, two cases being in Council houses. In four cases, conditions were much improved after several visits, but in the other two cases, I was not satisfied, and strong action may eventually be necessary.

13. Factories Inspections.

16 inspections were made, and as a result, several contraventions of the Factories Acts discovered. These were in connection with sanitary accommodation and cleanliness, and the necessary provision or improvements were secured informally.

By the end of the year, a further 38 premises (23 "power" and 15 "non-power") had been added to the register, and these required inspection after checking with the Factory Inspector's list.

14. Destruction of Rats and Mice.

The level of infestation in the Council's District remained high throughout the year. During the first six months the destruction of rats and mice was carried out by the Norfolk Agricultural Executive Committee entirely, orders being placed for treatment of the refuse tips.

By June, however, the Council's own organisation set up to implement the provisions of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, was ready. A Rodent Operative had been appointed by the Council, and trained by the Ministry of Agriculture. A depot with suitable equipment had been set up at the Stone Cross Garage, and an 8 h.p. van provided for transport. The Council decided that domestic premises should be treated free of charge, whilst a charge of 6/- per hour should be levied in the case of business premises.

The service commenced on 12th June, pre-baiting followed by poisoning being the main method of treatment. The position obtaining at the end of the year is shown by the following table:—

TYPE OF PROPERTY

	Council's own property	Dwelling Houses	Agricul- tural	All other (including Business and Industrial)	Total
I. Total number of properties in the District	15	6271	1584	268	8138
II. Number of prop- erties inspected in the District during 1951 as a result (a) of notification or (b) otherwise.	(a)	25	5	11	41
	(b) 10	140	5	18	173
III. Number of properties (un- der II) found to be infested by rats.	Major 7	21	5	12	45
	Minor 3	140	5	6	154
IV. Number of properties (un- der II found to be seriously in- fested by mice.	—	4	—	—	4
V. Number of in- fested properties (under III and IV) treated by the Council.	10	165	10	18	203
VI. Number of “block” con- trol schemes car- ried out. 10					

No legal proceedings were necessary, and it is felt that the service was appreciated by the Ratepayers. 50% of the cost of the service, after deduction of income from treatment at business premises, is recoverable from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

I should like to point out, however, that in a District of this size, with its miles of drains and ditches, one man is insufficient to enable the Council to carry out the duty imposed by the Act which is “to ensure that, as far as practicable, the area, is kept free from rats and mice.” I am given to understand that the staff of the Agricultural Executive Committee has diminished of late.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,
G. S. SENNITT,
Senior Sanitary Inspector.

